

## Solving Your Conflicts

When couples fail to solve recurring conflicts within their relationship the result is always a growing sense of frustration, disappointment, and irritation with each other. Ultimately, as this situation continues year after year in a marriage there is a growing conviction that these issues will never be worked out and the couple drifts farther and farther apart. Therefore, it is imperative that you and your spouse purpose to diligently and honestly work through the following process, which is designed to help you solve these stubborn problems. Ask God to give you the love and the willingness to put these decisions into action.

**I. Determine if you an attacker or a retreator? Why?** If you want to solve your conflicts you must stop these destructive forms of behavior. You can't solve anything if you attack or retreat from each other.

- a. Are you the more verbal individual? = Attacker
- b. Do you want to jump in and work things out quickly? = Attacker
- c. Are you usually after your mate to work on these problems? = Attacker
- d. Are you the less verbal individual? = Retreator
- e. Do you try to avoid discussions about conflict? = Retreator
- f. Are you usually being pursued by your spouse to work on problems? = Retreator

**II. Determine what the real problem is that is dividing you.**

- a. To determine what the real problem is, simply ask God to open your eyes to your own faults in this recurring conflict. Jesus said this was the *first* thing you must do to solve any conflict (Matt. 7:5).
- b. Once you identify these faults, list each below.

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**III. Attack the problem.**

- a. If you attack your personal faults you will instantly stop the fruitless cycle of retreating or attacking each other. Only then can you make the progress you long for in this recurring conflict.
- b. To attack the problem you must deal with your faults by following biblical commands, which address the issues themselves (i.e. approaching your spouse, honesty, confession, repentance, requesting and granting forgiveness, and any restitution that may be necessary).

**IV. Resolve the problem.**

- a. To resolve the problem, simply choose to acknowledge your personal faults, ask for forgiveness, pray together to remove the hardness within both of your hearts, and ask for His empowering Spirit of love to overflow you once again.
- b. Most couples stop after this step of resolving an issue, which means the conflict will probably reoccur again very soon. Take the next step to fully solve the conflict.

**V. Solve the problem.**

- a. Pray and ask God for His wisdom to solve this conflict (James 1:5).
- b. Now be creative and begin to think and discuss ways that you could avoid this conflict in the future.
- c. Begin by addressing your personal faults listed above. What could you do differently relating to each attitude and action that you listed?
- d. Come to an agreement with your spouse concerning how you will handle this conflict in the future.
- e. List the future actions each of you will take.

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- f. Pray and ask the Lord for the power of His Spirit to help you keep your commitment.

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